

May 5, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Capitol Building, H-232  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Capitol Building, H-204  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

We write in support of dedicated funding for School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) in any upcoming coronavirus response package. There are over 2,000 centers across the nation, including 221 in Michigan, that are uniquely poised to address the immense physical and mental health needs of students and families resulting from COVID-19. A dedicated funding stream of \$100 million for these centers would enable expanded access to health care and mental health services for students and families, even while schools remain closed, avoiding any potential gaps in care both during and after the pandemic.

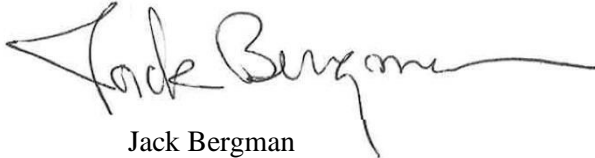
Currently, SBHCs across the nation provide invaluable comprehensive health care services to over two million young people. These centers will become an even more vital resource for mental health services as a result of this pandemic, when many students and families might struggle with trauma and anxiety about returning to school, coupled with rising unemployment rates and economic instability. The centers also provide immediate support to communities during the pandemic by employing clinicians who can diagnose and treat COVID-19 patients, as well as case managers and nurses that support families when a parent has tested positive for COVID-19.

While schools in Michigan will be closed for the remainder of the year, they have been asked to continue to provide mental health care services for students, to the extent possible. This is important because indefinite school closures have created a gap in primary and behavioral health services that will persist at least through the end of summer, if not longer, as some SBHCs that operate in school facilities have been forced to shut their doors. This interruption in services has caused a major loss of revenue for centers across the nation that are still operating, as most SBHCs receive the majority of their funding through reimbursement activities via Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). More funding is needed to ensure that Michigan SBHCs can continue to support Michigan communities by providing vital mental health services to students during the pandemic.

Additional federal funding for SBHCs will ensure that centers can continue to provide invaluable care for families and students, even while schools remain closed for the foreseeable future. With additional funding, these centers can provide expanded mental health services via telemedicine, deploy more staff to diagnose and treat those with COVID-19, and establish new centers in communities that are hardest hit by the virus. Funding would also support preparations for any potential second peak of COVID-19 infections.

Our schools have been called on to continue to provide mental health services for students, even while they remain closed for the rest of the year. Additional federal support will allow our SBHCs to provide these necessary services to students in Michigan and across the country. We look forward to continuing to work with you to address the challenges brought on by COVID-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Bergman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel T. Kildee". The signature is cursive and compact.

Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress

Andy Levin  
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress

Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress

Brenda Lawrence  
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress

Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress

Fred Upton  
Member of Congress